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than indicating, in a general way, the manner in which Dr. Bode has handled this part of his subject. He first considers the nature and the age of lyric poetry, which he traces back to the ante-Homeric period. He illustrates the history of the Pæan, its application to the worship of Apollo, and describes the musical accompaniments. From this, he proceeds to take up, one after another, the successive species of lyric poetry, the different kinds of music which were appropriated to them, the occasions on which they were composed and recited, along with very ably drawn sketches of the lives, characters, and poetical value of the several inventors and authors. The discussions, in this part, conclude with some exceedingly curious details upon the musical principles of the Greeks. But this is a subject too large and difficult to be undertaken at the end of an article. When the other volumes arrive, we may, perhaps, resume our remarks, and consider the peculiarities of Greek lyric poetry at some length.

ART. VIII. — *The Poetical Works of THOMAS CAMPBELL.*
A New Edition. London. 1836.

Too much, we think, is generally attributed to the influence of the prevailing spirit of the times, in determining the character of poetry. Those, from whose writings that character is inferred, are few in number, and, not unfrequently, in a position as far as possible beyond the reach of such an influence. Take, for example, Burns and Cowper; who have been referred to with the view of showing, that the reforming energy, which manifested itself, near the close of the last century, in politics and various forms of literature, was communicated to poetry by the same deep impulse. It would not be easy to name two individuals, of any literary eminence, who were more removed, by circumstances, from the interests and passions, which swayed the living mass around them. When Burns, in the solitude of his lowly cottage at Mossgiel, was pouring the full tide of song from the depths of his proud and manly heart, he was as much sequestered from the great world and its sympathies, as if

he had dwelt in the loneliest island of the North Sea ; scarcely acquainted even with the names of the poets of his time ; and finding the source of his inspiration in the fountain within him, springing up to immortality. Cowper was driven from the society of men by causes too painful and too familiar to require to be told ; his poetry was the music by which, when the evil spirit was upon him, " he was refreshed, and was well " ; nothing surely was indifferent to him, which might affect the moral welfare of his race ; but the hopes and interests of the world, and even its intellectual progress, were to him of little moment in any other point of view. Going back a hundred years further, we indeed observe the influence of the spirit of the age on Dryden, who prostituted his gigantic strength to make sport for the Philistines at the festival of Dagon. But what trace of it is to be found in the character of Milton ? Well and truly was it said of him, that " his soul was like a star, and dwelt apart." The spirit of his time affected him no more than the gathering mist impairs the lustre of the star, which it hides for a moment from the eye. A mind like his was fitted to guide it, rather than obey.

No doubt there are certain influences, which aid in determining the direction of poetical talent, as they do of every other kind. Milton kept constantly in view the sublime hope, that he might leave something to after times, so written, as that they would not willingly let it die. Whenever he alludes to his immortal work, it is plain, that he looks for no sudden popularity, or early fame. But poetry is now an article of traffic ; and one may fix its value with nearly the same precision, as the current prices of other commodities are stated in the daily newspapers. Instead of appealing to the judgment of posterity, the author of the present day stands before an awful Rhadamanthus, in the person of his publisher. What the prerogatives of such a judge may be, is shown by a circumstance, which Scott relates, in reference to his tale of " *Ivanhoe*." His publisher had taken a fancy to Athelstan, the descendant of Saxon kings, who was untimely slain by the hand of Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, the Knight Templar, and insisted, that Scott should restore him from this state of " cold obstruction." Scott, who saw plainly enough the absurdity of the suggestion, re-

sisted, for a time, but at last brought back the knight to life, and thus fixed a sad blemish on a work, which had otherwise been almost faultless. In another of his romances, "St. Ronan's Well," the whole character of the story was changed in obedience to another suggestion of the same kind. All this comes from a determination to be popular; of the chance of which, the publisher is admitted to be a better judge than the author; at least, he can determine, with unerring certainty, what he inclines to pay for. It is well understood, that Scott received about as much for every line of one of his poems, as was paid to Milton for each book of his "Paradise Lost." The writer is thus driven, by a temptation which few can resist, to consult the prevailing taste, and to prefer the reward which awaits him here, to that which is reserved for the highest genius hereafter, when his merit will be weighed in the balance of calm, deliberate judgment. So has it been with most of the poets of our time. "As the lightning flashed, they went onward by its light; when it vanished into darkness, they stood still." Wordsworth is, indeed, a striking example to the contrary. He, from the beginning, avowed his persuasion, that the poet has before him the double task of creating the taste by which his works are to be valued, as well as the works themselves; but we shall presently see, that others have been contented to omit the heavier portion of this task. They have acted under the persuasion, that the voice of poetry was too small and still to make itself heard amidst the din of the wheels of industry, and the roar of the trumpets of reform; that novelty alone could attract attention; and that the question for them to solve was, what form of novelty would be most likely to produce the desired effect.

At the same time, we believe, that there is more lamentation over the decline of poetry, than the exigency requires. The tendency, on the part of poets, is, doubtless, in that direction; but the complaint is founded on a supposed indifference to all poetry on the part of readers. This indifference has been commonly ascribed to the progress of physical science, which, as many apprehend, is to obtain an entire monopoly of interest. But the danger, we apprehend, is greatly overrated. The two circumstances do not necessarily stand toward each other in the relation of cause and effect;

though many will hardly believe that it can be otherwise, when they happen to coincide in point of time ; as the people of Norway were out of patience with inoculation, because fish were scarce upon their coasts at the time when it was introduced. We have no fears, that the public attention will be so absorbed, for any length of time, by one pursuit, as to disregard all others. Such, certainly, is not the lesson of experience. Nothing is more common, than to attach an undue importance to the passing event, and the object before us. The complaint, in Johnson's day, was of quite a different sort. Then, "the cook warbled her lyrics in the kitchen, and the thresher vociferated his dithyrambics in the barn." That was a season of fat poetical kine. But there has been no perceptible increase, since his day, in the melody of the one, or the inspiration of the other. One age, or, what is the same thing, man in one age, is much more like man in another, than we are always willing to allow. Great genius, of any kind, is among the most rare of heaven's gifts ; great poetical genius, perhaps, the most rare of all. And it would be quite unreasonable to complain, that blessings, which have been dispensed, in times past, in numbers scarcely equal to that of the centuries, should be lavished in showers upon this generation. We have had our share. As the shades were closing on the last century, there were many stars, of no ordinary promise, going up in the sky ; and it has been given to us to walk in their light. There is no period in English history, of the same length, more fertile in poetical talent, than the last fifty years ; not that the names of Shakspeare and Milton are not far greater than any which this age can show ; but that the diversity and brilliancy of those, who are but a little lower than the angels, have been far more signal than in former time. The present moment of repose may be regarded rather as a dying fall, to be followed by a bolder strain, than as the stillness of death.

We propose to offer a few cursory remarks on some of the principal poets of our time ; and it will readily appear, to what extent they have, perhaps at first unconsciously, availed themselves of the influence of novelty in attracting the general attention. Scott is the most striking illustration of this ; as he was among the first. His "Lay of the Last Minstrel" was written at the suggestion of a lady, and gradually ex-

tended far beyond its original design ; but he appears to have had little expectation of the triumphant welcome with which it was received. The idea was not new, though novel to modern readers. It was rather a revival of the old metrical romance, in which the exploits of the heroes of chivalry were recorded, for the edification of readers of ages long gone by. One would have thought it rather a hazardous experiment to attempt to excite much interest in the exploits of cavaliers, which displayed little more intellect, than the swinging of a blacksmith's hammer, or in those of moss-troopers, whose only appropriate station would have been the gibbet. But Scott's knowledge of the world taught him better. He knew, that the recollections of the old glories of chivalry had a charm, like that of the green that overhangs its ruined fortresses ; and that, empty as it was, and senseless as were its usages, beside that modern civilization was very much its debtor, the world would never be weary of admiring its strange union of the liberal grace of refinement with the sternness of the rudest barbarism. But his true taste divined full well, that he could not reproduce the heroes of Froissart precisely as they were, and he therefore blended their harsher traits with modern sentiments and manners, and thus produced a picture, which, compared with the reality, was like the feudal system, as it appears in "*Ivanhoe*," by the side of the same system, as portrayed by the venerable sages of the law.

The "*Lay of the Last Minstrel*" was a story of little interest in its details ; but, inspired as it was with all the wild and thrilling associations of chivalry, uttered in a measure singularly bold and animated, and fitly imagined to proceed from one of the bards, who seem to make a part of the romantic drama, its cadences fell upon the ear like the triumphant strains of martial music. It would be vain to attempt to describe their effect to those whose memory goes not back so far as the period when the poem was first published. Nobody saw or felt, that the versification was often hurried and ungraceful, almost extemporaneous, and rarely indicative of much revision. The right chord was touched ; and, when all readers were under the shadow of the spell, poetry of a much higher cast would have found neither "*fit audience*," nor even "*few*." "*Marmion*," with its glorious battle

scene, kindled even fiercer enthusiasm. But the charm of novelty was passing by ; and the “ Lady of the Lake,” one of the most beautiful romantic fictions which ever poet dreamed, found less favor, though more judicious approbation, than the “ Lay.” In the course of a few years, the tide had fairly turned ; insomuch that the “ Lord of the Isles,” a hastily wrought, but thrilling tale, founded on one of the most memorable events in Scottish history, and presenting one of the few instances, in which the writer attempted to paint the real heroes of his country, was received either with indifference or faint applause. The poet, with the modesty which forms the unusual grace and ornament of popular talent, believed, that the fiery lustre of Lord Byron’s star had diminished the brightness of his own. But it was not so ; the probability is, that, had the order of their appearance been changed, he would have become the idol at the expense of his great rival. But the novelty was gone ; and, with the elastic energy, in which no man ever abounded more, he entered upon another, and even more successful, path of labor ; one, in which he was enabled, free from the shackles of poetical measure, to pour forth the rich results of his study, keen observation, and knowledge of mankind, in a series of romances, which will be remembered long after all his critics shall have been forgotten. No doubt these are poems as truly as the metrical ones. But the form was one, which gave him the full command of his powers. With a perception of character, hardly inferior to that of Shakspeare, he could not, like him, fix it upon the canvass with a single touch of his pencil. But his sketches, though more slowly wrought, were nearly as lifelike and real.

The impression, made by these romances, was, in the first instance, in no degree inferior to that of the metrical ones, and it was much more durable in its character. If they excited attention by their novelty, they secured it by some higher qualities. If they have now given place to other forms of the novel, the world is certainly no gainer by the exchange. Inferior minds have naturally resorted to inferior means to gain the public ear ; and, be the objections to the historical romances what they may, the cause of virtue will gain little by the substitution of what has followed them, from the swaggering dandyism of the Pelham school, down to

the loathsome abominations of "Jack Shephard." Such things attract attention, doubtless ; and the dramatist, who should build a gibbet on the stage, an appropriate implement, by the way, for the use of many modern fashionable heroes, would be sure to find an audience ; not from any talent displayed in the achievement, but from the unusual character of the exhibition.

In some respects, it was with Lord Byron as it had been with Scott. At first he appears to have mistaken his powers ; he had set his heart upon excelling in satire, and regarded "Childe Harold," the foundation of his fame, as the mere amusement of an idle hour. But satire certainly was never meant for him ; he was too obedient to passion to preserve even a decent show of justice towards the objects of his wrath. Compare, for example, his "English Bards" with Dryden's "Absalom and Achitophel," and it will be readily seen what a keen and fatal edge is given to satire by allowing the merit of its object, and thus presenting the evil qualities in revolting shade. When "Childe Harold" appeared, this delusion passed for the time away ; for its high poetical beauty, aided in some degree, no doubt, by its author's exalted rank, made it at once a favorite with all readers. From the moment that he caught the gale, he spread his sail to welcome it, with consummate skill. The man of mystery, half concealed, like Æneas, in a cloud whose edges were bright with the glitter of rank and fashion, moving among men as if he were not of them, partly from a jealous shyness and partly from a sad contrast between his personal circumstances and his social position, became an object of deep and almost painful interest. Nor was this unnatural ; with powers that might have raised him to the highest place in any way of life he had chosen to pursue, he had within him all the elements of a noble character ; but all, all were darkened by circumstances, that fill the mind less with indignation than with sorrow. His father was eminently distinguished as a worthless libertine, in an age when such distinction was any thing but rare ; his parents lived apart, and he was early consigned to the exclusive charge of his mother, a woman of little sense and tempestuous passions, who would occasionally reproach and ridicule her son in consequence of that personal deformity, the consciousness of which was torture to him till his latest hour. Under such circumstances,

the only wonder is, that his intellect and his heart did not become equally desolate. The heart perished, but the intellect survived. In the one, kind affections flashed occasionally forth, like the warm sunbeam through the gloom of a November day ; but fixed principles of character there were absolutely none ; all that he thought or did was the result of impulse. In the other, there was nobleness enough to call forth in us deep and lasting sadness, that “ the inward prompting, which grew daily upon him,” should have been so unlike those by which Milton consecrated himself to his high and holy task.

All this, however, gave powerful aid to the effect of his poetry ; nor is it unjust to him to believe, that he was not reluctant to find the public eye fixed upon himself as well as on his works. Both were sufficiently out of the common track to attract immediate attention. A young nobleman, eminently distinguished for his personal beauty, flies from the brilliant circles that burn to welcome him, wraps himself in mysterious reserve, and becomes the victim of melancholy. When all appears bright and joyous to the common eye, his personal history and dark thoughts are shadowed forth in the wild and unearthly music of his poetry. He wanders in regions inspired by chivalrous and classical associations. Now, he stands in the Eternal City, and the shades of orators, poets, and heroes, start from her ruined arches ; his foot is on the soil of Greece, and all the loveliness and glory of that treasury of literary fame are warmed into life before him ; once more upon the waters, and deep calleth unto deep ; and again he turns to the battle-field, where are gathered the buried martyrs of ambition ; and the earthquake of its artillery would hardly stir the soul, like his unveiling of its dark and bloody record.

The great Mokanna dies ; his silver veil drops from his brow ; the mysteries of his seclusion, alas ! no holy ones, are revealed ; the friends who shared his table sell the results of his misplaced confidence before he is cold in his grave. Then the romantic interest attached to his person perishes, and he stands at the literary bar, shielded only by the majesty of his commanding talent. But the perversion of his genius is scarcely inferior to that of his moral powers ; and, with an infirmity like that which vice draws after it, he is perpetually pursuing the same course which he perpetually denounces and condemns. His own poetical system, and those of most

of his contemporaries, he has often described as revolutionary ones, and has predicted their rapid decline. Doubtless they are so, as respects their adaptation to strike and dazzle, rather than to win permanent fame ; but there are few who have acknowledged the fact to themselves, and endeavoured to impress it on others, with the freedom and energy of Lord Byron. In fact, his letters present in this point of light a singular contrast to the course attributed to another ; his conduct being still wrong and his argument right. How long his writings will survive, must be left for other ages to determine ; but if we might without presumption hazard a conjecture as to their relative chances of immortality, it would be that the smaller ones will outlast those which have given greater glory to his name.

These are the two high-priests, whose oracles may be regarded as the example and the guide of others ; nor would it be difficult, by a brief review of the works of some of these, to show that the same effort to attract attention by novelty has been often made, with various degrees of power and success. But it is our desire to speak more particularly of one or two, in reference to whom such a charge is less applicable.

Byron, in his enumeration of those who are proceeding upon what he calls the revolutionary system, has included Campbell, upon what grounds, we do not precisely see ; for, except in the instance of "Theodric," which fell so silently from the press that it is hardly remembered, his course has been very much at variance with what we have described as the modern one. After a long interval of repose, perceiving the race of popularity which others were running, whose claims could hardly be considered superior to his, he appears to have become possessed with the desire of trying the experiment of a style, as unlike his natural one, as the habiliments of a modern exquisite are unlike the dress suited to a grave gentleman, "by 'r Lady, inclining to threescore." The style was rough and jaunty, with an infusion of the swagger ; but it satisfied the reader as little as it became the author ; and cannot fairly be taken into the account in an estimate of his poetical merits. The "Pleasures of Hope," if not his best poem, certainly his most popular one, was published when he had scarcely reached the age of manhood ; and yet very few,

written in the full maturity of genius, have made a deeper or more abiding impression. No better evidence could be given of the strength of the impression made by any work, than the facility and frequency with which it is quoted ; and, considered in reference to this standard, we can scarcely point to the poem which has taken stronger hold of the general mind. Its forms of expression are household words ; the traveller in South America involuntarily speaks of Andes, as the “ giant of the western star ; ” and the aspirations of faith are not unfrequently clothed in the beautiful language of this remarkable poem. The age of the author, if it may not be admitted in the way of palliation of any alleged defects, is at least sufficient to explain them. Let any man look round upon the circle of his acquaintance, and see what the most intelligent would be likely to produce at the age of twenty-one, and he will surely cease to wonder at its imperfections. Perhaps those very imperfections have had the effect of increasing its popularity. The writer, a young man just leaving college, brought up in the ordinary seclusion of such institutions, where he is apt to become much more familiar with the men of ages past, than with mankind and nature as they are now, and sees every thing through the medium of colored glass, describes the visions of hope as they spring up in a mind, so taught and disciplined. He could not have done otherwise ; and, when compelled to go beyond the sphere of his observation, and describe men as they feel and act under circumstances new to him, he is sure to overstep the modesty of nature. When we object to such a work that it is a juvenile one, the objection amounts to no more than this, that the dreams of his hope are not like those of older men.

Indeed, the prevailing defects of this poem appear to us to be such as naturally spring from the inexperience of the writer. Occasionally, he is called upon to describe scenes unknown to him, and feelings with which he could not be familiar ; and here his views are derived from books, and want the reality and vividness of nature. He bids the youth go forth, in the enthusiasm of youthful hope, not to the stern discipline of life, to wrestle with temptation, to subdue the rebellious powers of evil, but to rest in the calm retreats of science, to follow the footsteps of the philosopher through regions above earth, to visit the walks of wisdom where the “ sacred Nine

are nigh." This is not the language of those who have acted and suffered in the world ; still, it is the natural expression of the feeling of one, who has been reposing in the classical shades of the university. And this, to us, gives a charm to the work, which nothing else could give so well. His visions are bright with the hues of youth, and as undefined and changing as the kindling clouds, that gather in the morning twilight round the throne of the rising sun. To those, the shadows of whose dial are shortened into noon, the gorgeousness has vanished ; but, though they feel them no longer, they have felt them once ; and may regard the enthusiastic description of them, as the old, in Goldsmith's " Village," survey the sports of the young beneath the spreading tree. The theme is appropriate to the poet. The young man cannot describe, because he cannot know, the feelings, the interests, and the thoughts of age ; while, on the other hand, the hopes of age have lost their lustre, and are subdued and still. The sentiment of memory, in all ages, is essentially the same ; even the young man, whose May of life has not yet fallen into the sear and yellow leaf, looks back, like Obidah, with thoughtful sadness on the path he has already traversed, as if it led from a brighter region than any towards which his footsteps tend ; and the aged know that it is too surely so. But it is far otherwise with hope ; the earthly hope of youth is as unlike that of age, as the elastic frame of opening manhood to the palsied and wasting form that trembles over the grave. Yet there are hopes, that come alike to all ; the anticipations of an immortal life ; and here it is that the poet throws aside the character of youth, and treats his grand and overwhelming subject with the fulness of his power.

It may be admitted, that the writings of Campbell betray little evidence of the knowledge of individual character, or interest in it as an object of study. He is never borne away by passion, but is calm, contemplative, and thoughtful, except when roused to strong emotion by the trumpet-call of freedom. In this way, he may fail to gratify those who love to deal with that which " the blood most stirs " ; which excites and startles, rather than pleases ; but with the great majority of readers, who love the sunshine better than the storm, this quality is not likely to impair his influence. In " Gertrude of Wyoming " the story is abruptly and not dis-

tinently told ; the images are those of pastoral life, without much care for the truth of scenery or manners ; nor are the characters produced with any remarkable power. But the quiet retreat of simplicity and peace, made desolate by the most relentless of all foes, presents a contrast, which, when clothed in his rich and melodious versification, touches every heart. We have heard the opinion sometimes expressed, that his lyrical productions are wanting in fire, and awaken nothing of the feeling without inspiring which such poetry is nothing. Unquestionably they are the result of much labor, and finished with the most scrupulous care ; but it is not easy to see how the charge of coldness can be brought against “Ye Mariners of England,” or the “Battle of the Baltic” ; except by those, with whom national glory is but an empty name. They certainly stir the spirit, as with the sound of a trumpet ; and we believe that they will animate the sailor’s heart, so long as the meteor flag of England shall burn upon the deep.

We are far from pretending that Campbell can be regarded as among the greatest of the masters of the lyre ; but there are many elevated stations on Parnassus, beneath the level of the summit on which Shakspeare and Milton are enthroned. Posterity may have a welcome to extend to the prophet, as well as to the king. We cannot entertain a doubt, that he will survive many, whose popularity in their day has gone far beyond his. He was probably capable of greater things than any he has yet accomplished. It was the remark of Scott, that he was frightened by the shadow of his own fame ; but this could hardly happen except to a genius naturally timid, and reluctant to incur the hazard of a bolder flight. Such fastidiousness is not unfrequently the companion and the curse of exalted powers ; it seems, like *mauvaise honte* in social life, to bind the faculties as with a spell, and to convert the living into stone. This infirmity has undoubtedly withheld Campbell from efforts, which would have given new lustre to his name. But he has the great merit, in which some of his contemporaries have been sadly wanting, of revising without scruple, and blotting without reluctance ; and has deemed it no mark of inspiration or of wisdom to pour out his effusions like an Italian improvisatore, till the press almost pants in the effort to keep pace with him. His descriptive power is in-

ferior to that of Scott ; he has little of the passionate energy, nothing of the sublime egotism, of Byron ; little of the magic imagination of Southey ; but he has the best poetical qualities, mingled in just proportions ; in beauty of illustration, in the power of producing effect without extravagance, in the mechanism of his art, he yields to none of these. His animation is without vehemence, his feeling without frenzy, his melody without harshness. The young will continue to worship Byron, the old may give the preference to Wordsworth ; but the general reader, who asks neither consuming passion nor profound philosophy, will probably fix his affections on Campbell, as one who uniformly pleases, without ever aiming to startle or astonish.

“ Out, hyperbolical fiend ! how vexest thou this man ! talkest thou nothing but of ladies ? ” Some Sir Topas of twenty-five years ago might have thus as fitly exorcized the demon that possessed Moore, as he of the “ Twelfth Night ” did the one that troubled Malvolio. This distinguished writer, who still lives in the fancy of many as gifted with immortal youth, has probably reached the solemn portion of life’s journey, that lies somewhere between threescore and its less frequently allotted ten ; yet it is by no means unusual to hear him spoken of, as if, like Falstaff, he were still in “ the va’ward of manhood.” When he was a very young man, he visited this country, and found its democracy so little to his taste, that he made it the subject of bitter satire ; but the ramshorn was not sufficiently sonorous for the Jericho, and our frame of government has fortunately survived the shock. On his return to his own country, he constituted himself the laureat of Bacchus and of Love ; became the oracle of young ladies, especially those of the boarding-school, who were charmed to find their sentimental passions, “ the bloom of young desire, and purple light of love,” embodied in flowery and harmonious verse. If the truth must be told, his conduct in this respect was equally insidious and base ; and it tells ill for the moral feeling of the day, that the same sentiments which, clothed in plain terms, would have been simply revolting, came like delightful music on the ear in his graceful song. There are no terms of condemnation too severe to mark the prostitution of the divinest of arts to the foulest of purposes. Happily time, the great corrector of abuses, has a remedy for this, as for all

other evil ; the words, which flow winningly from the lips of youth, are ludicrous when mumbled by the toothless gentleman of sixty-five. Those who write for the centre-table must expect to be shortly out of fashion ; and to present themselves to the next generation like a hooped, cushioned, high-heeled beauty of the last century, rustling and creaking in a modern ball-room. Had Moore done always thus, he must have been regarded merely as one, who pelted gracefully with sugar-plums at the carnival ; as a writer of considerable powers, but low and vulgar tastes ; for it is not in the power of rank and fashion, whatever currency they may for the moment give to glittering and brocaded sensuality, so to construct the mask as long to hide its coarse features from the common eye. The poet, who limits his ambition to the applauses of Almack's, will soon find that "the lights are fled, the garlands dead" ; and, if he be a man of genius, of the highest poetical genius he can hardly be, will meet the sad retribution which invariably follows the abuse of exalted powers.

Any strong and not unworthy feeling, like the dramatic pity and terror, purifies the heart. There was a subject on which Moore felt deeply, and felt like a man. This subject was the wrongs of his country. For, whatever may be our impression of the demands of policy or necessity, one can hardly glance over the dreary waste of Irish history, without seeing that if England has been just, her justice has been slightly tempered with mercy ; for the Eternal City, in the flush of her proudest march of victory, rarely dealt with her subjected provinces as England has done with her sister isle. At least, it is certain that the elements of modern civilization sprung up in the bloody track of Rome's chariot wheels ; while Ireland has little cause of gratitude for aught that has been done by her conquerors to improve and elevate her. Even were this otherwise, there is enough in her present as there has been in her past condition, to make us cease to wonder at the intensity of feeling, with which her sons regard the condition of a land, abounding in all that nature or genius can bestow to make it great and prosperous. It was a fortunate suggestion, that induced Moore to adapt new songs to the old and favorite Irish airs, which have a charm for every ear, that has not been disciplined to stand the fire of a modern orches-

tra ; and it was fortunate too, that he availed himself of the occasion to express his natural and patriotic feeling. This feeling pervades them all, and seems to change the whole character of the poet and of the man. Something of the old leaven remains, but the Melodies that reveal it are the worst of the collection ; while those in which he puts by the faded graces in which he had been used to flourish, are rich in truth and beauty, and occasional loftiness of inspiration. A striking effect is produced in some of them by covering the sword with myrtle, like the patriots of old ; as, for example, in the singularly beautiful song, “ When he who has loved thee,” which appears to express merely the invocation of a dying lover, while it becomes far more touching and impressive, when regarded as the last address of the martyr of freedom to his country. There are other instances of this, which will readily occur to those who are familiar with the “ Irish Melodies.”

We need say little of “ Lalla Rookh,” because its prominent beauty is of the same kind with that to which we have just adverted, and its defects are of the same character with those of his earlier poems, though far from being disfigured by the same grossness. There is no great beauty in the thread on which its pearls are strung ; these are composed of a series of tales, which attract no very intense interest until we come to “ The Fire-worshippers ” ; then, his foot is on the soil of freedom, conceit and glitter are forgotten in the glow of patriotic enthusiasm, and the heart goes with the martyr of liberty through his race of disaster and sorrow, till he climbs the blazing altar. Moore’s mastery over the language is perfect ; he seems to possess a magic spell for converting every thing he touches into melody ; in following his sweet and flexible versification, one almost ceases to care what thought it expresses, or whether it conveys any thought at all ; and it must be admitted, that in his Oriental descriptions his inclination for display and brilliancy is sufficiently at home. But this inclination cannot be long indulged, except at the expense of manliness. Genius is always in earnest ; it does not disdain the aid of ornament, but disdains to make it other than an aid. The glory of Prometheus was not to decorate the senseless clay ; but to kindle the immortal fire within it ; to “ create a soul under the ribs of death.” Perhaps the secret of Moore’s defects is his ambition to make himself the idol of society.

Whoever estimates himself by the standard of fashionable praise holds his fame by the most precarious of all tenures. If Milton had aimed merely to catch the applauses of a court, and that the court of Charles the Second, what a blight would have been brought upon a genius, created by Providence for all time and all nations. Scott had acquired a monopoly of favor before "Gertrude of Wyoming" appeared; and Moore's "Lalla Rookh" was published while Byron was lord of the ascendant. Neither of these gained, nor did the authors probably expect them to gain, any remarkable popularity, as success was in those days founded on other qualities than such as they displayed; and the character of poetry was but another name for the peculiar traits of that of Scott and Byron. Their march was so triumphant, that it overwhelmed most other candidates for fame; though the inexhaustible fertility of Southey, and the calm confidence of Wordsworth, were not to be repressed by any adverse circumstances. In general, they were driven from poetry to other objects of pursuit; even Southey paused awhile in his epic career, to pour out a flood of histories, books of the church, biographies, and reviews. Campbell quietly retreated to the lecture-room and the editor's chair; and Moore employed himself in building the tombs of the prophets, whose living oracles he had most held in reverence.

But we must not forget, that our subject is more inexhaustible than the patience of the reader. What the character of English poetry will be in time to come, presents a most interesting subject of inquiry; but it would be as vain, we fear, to decide on it with certainty, as to predict the form and colors of the next year's clouds. Now that the fashion of excitement has for the moment passed away, and the field is again undisputed and open to the adventurer, it is not unreasonable to indulge the hope, that the east will soon redden with the promise of a purer, if not a brighter dawn, than that of the times which are gone by; not perhaps in the character of the intellect it shall call forth, but in that of the objects to which poetry shall be devoted. Is not the promise of its coming to be seen in the majesty with which even Byron, reckless and poor in moral elevation as he is, urges his crushing chariot wheels over the delusive glories of battle; in the calm inspiration with which Wordsworth finds the beautiful and true

in the pure affections of lowly hearts, and traces the footsteps of his God amidst the grandeur of his mountain solitudes ; in the thrilling strains, with which Southey celebrates the regeneration of the soul, and the victory of innocence and faith over the spells of dark enchanters ? The hour, we trust, is not far distant, when the spirit of the age shall be but another name for moral and spiritual advancement ; when the real glory of humanity shall no more be looked for in shame and blood, or in the tournaments and dungeon-keeps of barbarism. The beautiful spirit of poetry, "from heaven which came, to heaven returns" when her vestments are soiled by the grossness of mortality. Nor will the sphere of her dominion be diminished, as it grows more pure. She may unveil the depths and power of the affections ; accompany the philanthropist on his voyage of charity ; light the lamp of love, and kindle the altar-fire of devotion ; go up with the martyr to the mount of sacrifice ; and like the angels, when

" With solemn adoration down they cast,
Their crowns, inwove with amaranth and gold,"

consecrate herself and all her powers to Him, from whom the springs of real inspiration flow.

But how, and by what manner of man, is such a work to be accomplished ? Hear the answer in the words of one of the noblest of the sons of men. "An inward prompting grew daily upon me, that, by labor and intent study, which I take to be my portion in this life, joined to the strong propensity of nature, I might, perhaps, leave something, so written, to after times, as that they should not willingly let it die." Such was the divine vision, that burst upon the eye of the true prophet. Thus did he lift up his soul to the contemplation of the mighty task, which Providence had called him to perform. "The accomplishment of these intentions lies not but in a power above man's to promise ; but that none hath by more studious ways endeavoured, and with more unwearied spirit that none shall, that I dare almost aver of myself, so far as life and free leisure shall extend. Neither do I think it shame to covenant with any knowing reader, that some few years yet I may go in trust with him toward the payment of that, for which I am now indebted ; as being a work not to be raised from the heat of youth, or the vapors of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amorist, nor to be obtained by the invocation of dame

Memory and her Siren daughters ; but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim with fire from his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases." Let him, who would bind his brow with the amaranth that shades the fount of life, study at the feet of this great master. His home was left desolate ; the standard of freedom, long upborne by his strong hand, lay rent and trampled in the dust. He was poor, blind, and forsaken. But he counted all this as nothing. He "bated not a jot of heart or hope." The celestial light irradiated his mind through all her powers. To the eye of man, his course was finished, and his purposes were broken off. Yet, in the fulness of time, the glorious vision of his youth and manhood was made permanent ; the mortal put on immortality.

ART. IX. — 1. *The School Library.* Published under the Sanction of the Board of Education of the State of Massachusetts. Boston : Marsh, Capen, Lyon, & Webb. 1839.

- (1.) *Introductory Essay to the School Library.* IRVING'S *Life and Voyages of Columbus, with the Author's Visit to Palos, and a Portrait, Map, and other Illustrations.* 12mo. pp. xlviii., 325.
- (2.) PALEY'S *Natural Theology, with Selections from the Illustrative Notes, and the Preliminary Dissertations of SIR CHARLES BELL, and LORD BROUGHAM, the whole newly arranged and edited by ELISHA BARTLETT, M. D.* With numerous Wood Cuts, and a Life and Portrait of the Author. 2 vols. 12mo. pp. 365, 454.
- (3.) *Lives of Eminent Individuals, celebrated in American History.* 3 vols. 12mo. pp. xii., 364 ; xii., 380 ; vii., 399.
- (4.) *Sacred Philosophy of the Seasons,* by the Rev. HENRY DUNCAN, D. D. ; adapted to *American Readers,* by the Rev. F. W. P. GREENWOOD, D. D. 4 vols. 12mo. pp. xvi., 389, 391, 401, 416.